

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15

OMB-01 AID-20 RSR-01 /111 W
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P 271950Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3397

INFO USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 6348

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, AR, (LOPEZ REGA)

SUBJECT: PERON MAKES OVERTURES TO LEFT: IMPLICATIONS FOR
LOPEZ REGA'S POSITION

REF: BA-6304 AND BA-6245

1. SUMMARY: PERON NOW ENDEAVORING REACH SOME MODUS VIVENDI
WITH LEFT WING OF HIS MOVEMENT. LOPEZ REGA'S LEAVE OF ABSENCE
CLEARLY A PART OF THIS PLOY AND IS DESIGNED TO REMOVE SOURCE OF
FRICTION--I.E. LOPEZ RAGA HIMSELF. QUESTION WHICH CANNOT YET
BE ANSWERED IS WHETHER LOPEZ REGA WILL LEAVE CENTER STAGE ONLY
TEMPORARILY UNTIL AFTER ELECTIONS--OR WHETHER HIS ECLIPSE WILL BE
MORE PERMANENT. END SUMMARY.

2. IT IS NOW CLEAR THAT LOPEZ REGA'S LEAVE OF ABSENCE (SEE BA-6304)
IS PART OF A DEVELOPING MANEUVER ON PERON'S PART TO ACHIEVE SOME
DEGREE OF RAPPROCHEMENT WITH PERONIST YOUTH (PY) AND LEFT WING OF
MOVEMENT, LA NACION EDITORIALIST JOSE ESCRIBANO SPECULATES THAT
PERON PROBABLY DECIDED TO MAKE OVERTURE TO PERONIST YOUTH
AFTER THEIR AUG 22 RALLY AT ATLANTA STADIUM (SEE BA-6245).
LATTER WAS IMPRESSIVE DISPLAY OF THEIR STRENGTH, BOTH IN TERMS
OF SIZE AND DISCIPLINED ORGANIZATION; FURTHER, IT SERVED TO
DISTINGUISH MAIN BODY OF PY FROM EXTREMIST ELEMENTS, WHO
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STAGED THEIR OWN DEMONSTRATION IN FRONT OF CAPITOL--AN

AFFAIR WHICH LED TO VIOLENCE AND HEAD-ON CLASHES WITH POLICE. ATLANTA RALLY, ON OTHER HAND, WAS ORDERLY.

3. WHETHER ATLANTA RALLY HAD ANY INFLUENCE ON HIS THINKING OR NOT, PERON OBVIOUSLY HAS DECIDED IT IS TIME TO LOOK TO THE LEFT WING. ACCORDINGLY, JULIO YESSI, LOPEZ REGA'S PROTEGE WHO WAS RECENTLY APPOINTED TO REPRESENT PY ON EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF MOVEMENT, IS AT LEAST TEMPORARILY TAKING A BACK SEAT. PERON HAS AGREED TO MEET WITH A NUMBER OF YOUTH LEADERS MORE REPRESENTATIVE OF PY'S LEFT-LEANING BULK. ANOTHER INDICATION OF OPENING TO PY IS SEEN IN THEIR DECISION TO PARTICIPATE IN AUG 31 MOBILIZATION AND MARCH CALLED BY CGT TO SHOW SUPPORT FOR PERON'S CANDIDACY. APPARENTLY, AS MANY AS 30 THOUSAND PY MEMBERS WILL TAKE PART. PY PARTICIPATION SAID TO HAVE BEEN WORKED OUT BETWEEN YOUTH LEADERS OTHER THAN YESSI AND LABOR LEADER LORENZO MIGUEL.

4. PERONIST CONTACTS CLOSE TO LOPEZ REGA ARE, NEEDLESS TO SAY, TAKING LINE THAT LOPEZ REGA'S LEAVE OF ABSENCE IS "ONLY THEATER" ON PERON'S PART, WITH AIM OF REMOVING SOCIAL WELFARE MINISTER FROM LIMELIGHT UNTIL AFTER ELECTIONS. AFTER SEPT 23, THEY PREDICT, HE WILL BE BACK IN STRONGER POSITION THAN EVER.

5. OTHERS ARE NOT SO SURE. ESCRIBANO, FOR EXAMPLE, SPECULATES THAT LEFT WING WILL DOUBTLESS HAVE THEIR OWN CONDITIONS FOR RAPPROCHEMENT; ONE OF THEM MAY BE LOPEZ REGA'S HEAD. EDITORIAL IN AUG 25 EDITION OF PRO-PERON MAYORIA, MOREOVER, SUGGESTS LOPEZ REGA'S TEMPORARY VACATION MAY BE MORE PERMANENT. EDITORIAL PRAISES PERON FOR SELFLESSNESS IN LIVING UP TO HIS OWN SLOGAN: "FIRST THE COUNTRY, THEN THE MOVEMENT AND AFTER THAT THE MEN". IN TRANSFERRING LOPEZ REGA TO A LESS VULNERABLE FRONT, EDITORIAL WENT ON, PERON WAS DEPRIVING HIMSELF OF A LOYAL FRIEND AND ADVISOR WHO HAD BEEN AT HIS SIDE FOR YEARS. BUT AS IT WAS FOR GOOD OF MOVEMENT, PERON HAD MADE THE SACRIFICE.

6. COMMENT: THIS IS ANOTHER OF PERON'S ZIGS AND IS CLEARLY DESIGNED WITH IMPACT ON ELECTIONS IN MIND. IT SEEMS TO BE MORE A MATTER OF PERON TRYING TO BRING OVER LEFT AND YOUTH WING, RATHER THAN HIMSELF MOVING FROM RIGHT TO LEFT. HENCE, IT MAY NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT MUCH OF A CHANGE IN COURSE. EVEN SO, THE IMPACT ON LOPEZ REGA'S PERSONAL POSITION MIGHT NOT BE TEMPORARY. IT
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IS INTERESTING TO NOTE REPORTS THAT HE HAS MOVED OUT OF THE PERON HOUSEHOLD--THOUGH THIS, TOO, MAY SIMPLY BE WINDOW DRESSING.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 AUG 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973BUENOS06348
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS LODGE
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: BUENOS AIRES
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730814/aaaaakbe.tel
Line Count: 111
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: BA-6304 AND BA-6245
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15 JAN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <15-Jan-2002 by martinjw>; APPROVED <06-Feb-2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PERON MAKES OVERTURES TO LEFT: IMPLICATIONS FOR LOPEZ REGA'S POSITION
TAGS: PINT, AR, (LOPEZ REGA)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005